GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:526
ANSWERED ON:29.08.2001
MIG-21 FLYING COFFINS
NARESH KUMAR PUGLIA;SHYAMA SINGH

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem captioned `MIG-21 fighter aircraft now known as `flying coffins` ` as reported in the Times of India dated May 15, 2001;

(b) if so, whether the airworthiness of MIG-21 fighter planes has been causing serious doubts;

(c) whether the factors responsible for increase in accidents of fighter planes have been ascertained; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI JASWANT SINGH)

(a) to (d): A Statement is placed on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 526 FOR 29.8.2001

Yes, Sir. The Government`s attention has been drawn to the news item. The Government does not agree with this kind of sensationalisation of security related issues. The MIG-21 remain fully airworthy. These aircraft continue to carry out all the tasks, as planned during their first induction. In addition, maintenance checks and servicing procedures are regularly undertaken so as to ensure full airworthiness of all aircraft.

2. MIG variants constituting the bulk of our fighter aircraft fleet necessarily account for the bulk of the flying hours of IAF. Factors contributing to air accidents are constantly examined, reviewed and measures consistently instituted to reduce them. Some of these are:

(a) Each accident is investigated by an independent Court of Inquiry, comprising specialists from various fields, so as to determine the cause.

(b) Preventive measures based on the recommendations of the Court of Inquiry are then adopted in a time-bound manner.

(c) Human error (Aircrew/technical personnel) accounts for a substantial percentage of air accidents. Steps to improve the quality of training continue to be reviewed and implemented.

(d) Constant interaction with HAL and Original Equipment Manufacturers is also maintained to overcome technical defects, the second major contributor to the accidents.

(e) With a view to getting a wider perspective and scientific analysis for preventing accidents, a number of independent agencies including DRDO are involved in examining some cases of accident investigations.

(f) Measures have been/are being implemented to reduce bird hit accidents, another major cause of accidents.